



School of Nursing

**GRADUATE NURSING
HANDBOOK
2023-2024
HAMILTON, ONTARIO**

School of Nursing



WHO WE ARE?

Welcome to the School of Nursing at McMaster University. Here we empower our learners to innovate and lead change in an increasingly challenging healthcare environment where exceptional nurses can make all the difference.

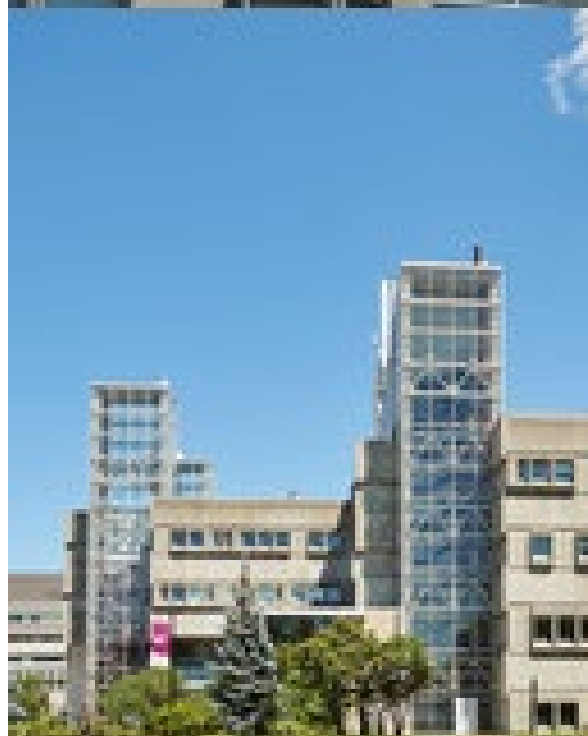
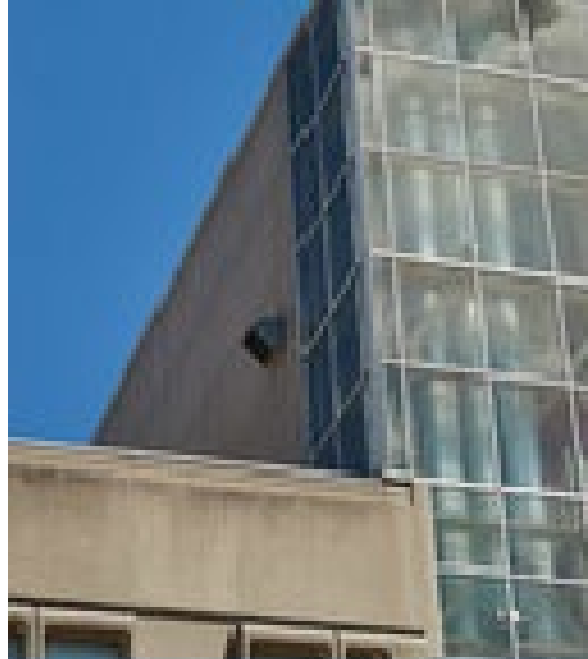
Our goal is simple – attract high-quality students, provide them with the best experience possible, and offer a range of different pathways in which they can excel.

At Mac Nursing, innovation runs deep. We created a much-lauded model of nursing that enables students to assess the quality of evidence and balance it with their patient's values and preferences. And we're a leader in problem-based learning, a McMaster innovation that ensures our nurses stand out not just for what learn, but for how they learn.

-Sandra Carroll, Vice – Dean, School of Nursing

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INTRODUCTION



In this Guide to Nursing Graduate Studies, you will find a wealth of information on all program requirements and general information that supplements the details provided in the Graduate Calendar. This document is not intended to replicate or modify the information found in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar. If there is any discrepancy between this document and the SGS Calendar, then the School of Graduate Studies Calendar shall prevail. Students and faculty are encouraged to look at the SGS Calendar for more information. We encourage you to pay close attention to the information provided in this handbook.



DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

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Email: carternm@mcmaster.ca

Ext: 22259

Jasmine Francis, Graduate Program Support Associate

Email: francj22@mcmaster.ca

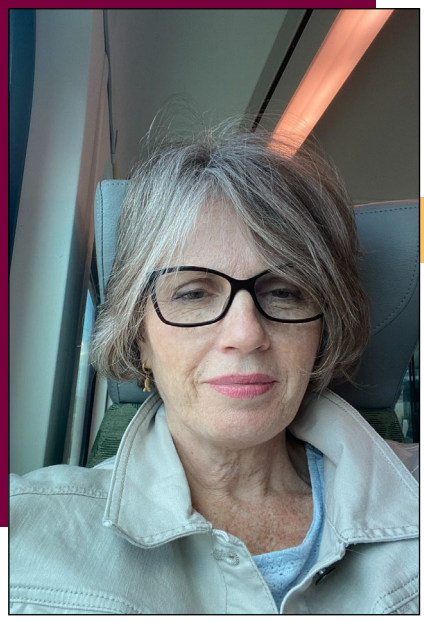
Ext: 22099

Graduate Nursing Program Office

Location: HSC 2J41

Email: gradson@mcmaster.ca

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN, GRADUATE STUDIES



The objective of the Nursing Graduate Program is to engage Registered Nurses who want to enhance their career opportunities through graduate education. A graduate degree or diploma opens many doors for nurses, whether your interest is clinical care or practice, education, research or leadership.

We offer three Masters degrees in three streams (Course based, Thesis based and Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner) for nurses wanting to practice at an advanced level. We also offer the PHCNP Certificate for nurses who already have a Master's degree.

For nurses with a passion for research, we offer the PhD program. Our award winning graduate faculty include nurses doing research on healthy aging, palliative care, diabetes care, cardiovascular health, oncology, primary care, public health, long term care and advanced practice nursing. Our students are supported through generous admission scholarships, internal travel and research bursaries, and support for external awards and scholarships.

Dr. Nancy Carter, Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Programs

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Academic Integrity:

The main purpose of a university is to encourage and facilitate the pursuit of knowledge and scholarship. The attainment of this purpose requires the individual integrity of all members of the University community, including all graduate and undergraduate students.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

McMaster University is committed to excellence in teaching and learning. The University strives to ensure every student is afforded an academic environment that is dedicated to the advancement of learning and is based on the principles of equitable access and individual dignity.

Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

The University recognizes the complexity of student life at a post-secondary institution and understands that students may have differing levels of experience addressing conflict, however, students will be responsible for their interactions with others. Students are expected to conduct themselves responsibly, in accordance with this Code, and to be individually responsible for their actions whether acting on their own or in a group.

Research Policy

The University states unequivocally that it demands research integrity from all of its members. Research misconduct, in whatever form, is ultimately destructive to the values of the University and society; furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to those who conduct their research with integrity.

Other Important Policies:

Discrimination & Harassment

Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances


Professional Behaviour Code of Conduct for Graduate Learners – Faculty of Health Sciences

Student Appeal Procedure

More Policies Available On: **School of Graduate Studies Academic Calendar** & **McMaster Policies Directory**


GETTING STARTED

MOSAIC




is McMaster's administrative information system. A student can access the student centre to enroll in courses and access services such as transcript requests, student accounts, payroll and T4 information, degree verification letters, and much more. Your MAC ID and password is required to access the Mosaic System Portal.

School of Graduate Studies




The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) is the main hub for all things Graduate Studies: We encourage students to review the SGS website in depth as this is home to information on scholarships, awards, registration instructions, thesis information, important dates, policies, forms and much more.

MAC ID:



is a unique, alphanumeric identifier provided to all McMaster community members to access university systems, resources and applications. Additional permissions may be required for some services. A MAC ID is not your student ID.

Graduate Nursing Program Communication Hub



is a communication hub for all graduate nursing students housed in Avenue to Learn. Here you will find a variety of documents, resources, and links to assist you with your graduate studies. It is your responsibility to check in regularly for updates and announcements.



Graduate Students Association (GSA):

The Graduate Students Association fosters and enables vibrant, engaged graduate students at McMaster University. They promote the welfare and interests of members through facilities and opportunities for social, athletic and intellectual activities. Important Services Through the GSA include the Health and Dental Plan, HSR Bus Pass and Bursaries & Awards



Faculty of Health Sciences Professionalism Office:

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) requires incoming candidates and returning students to provide Non-Academic Requirements (NARS) including health screening records and vulnerable sector police checks. These requirements are due every year and are required regardless of if students are in clinical or in the thesis portion of their program. Students who do not submit these documents on time are at risk of program suspension. The FHS professionalism office is responsible for tracking most of these requirements and will contact students throughout the year to obtain any required items.



STUDENT CARDS



Student Room:

HSC4N70 is the student room for Health Sciences Graduate Students. This is a space where you can relax, socialize and study. Wireless internet is available. You will be given permission for electronic entry to this room activated by your FHS Student ID Card.



McMaster Student ID

Your ID card identifies you as a McMaster University student: it displays your student number, name, photo, and contains an encoded magnetic strip. You will be able to use this card to obtain a variety of University services.



FHS Photo ID Badge

Students working or studying in the Health Science Center are required to carry an ID card when on hospital property. This card will also provide access to the Graduate Student Lounge (located on the 4th floor, across from the MDCL bridge). Please contact gradson@mcmaster.ca for instructions on how to obtain your ID badge.



Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Bus Pass:

All full-time graduate students are entitled to a 12-month, unlimited ride Presto card from September – August with the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR). New students can receive their Presto card from any local retailers and are required to register the bus pass by following the instructions on the [GSA website](#).



HEALTH AND DENTAL PLANS



Ontario Health Insurance

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage is restricted to permanent residents who live in Ontario. Permanent residents are Canadian citizens, landed immigrants and convention refugees. Visa students are not eligible for OHIP coverage. Ontario Universities/Blue Cross have instituted a Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) which is mandatory for all visa students, unless they can provide evidence of an acceptable alternative coverage. All visa students must complete a UHIP application form and return it to the International Students' Advisor in Gilmour Hall, room 104. At present, Visa students will be reimbursed for single UHIP coverage.

GSA Benefits

The McMaster GSA **Health and Dental Plan** provides students with unique health benefits. The plan was designed by students for students to provide many important services and cover expenses not covered by a basic health-care plan (i.e. OHIP), or the equivalent (e.g. UHIP for international students) such as prescription drugs, health practitioners, medical equipment, travel health coverage, and more. The GSA Health & Dental Plan automatically covers members who pay GSA and McMaster fees.

This includes international students who are paying McMaster fees. Certain exceptions exist. Please check your student account to confirm if you have been charged the plan fees.

Please note that you can extend your coverage to your spouse and/or dependent children

All questions about health and dental should first be directed to macgsa@mcmaster.ca.

CUPE: UNIT 1 for Teaching Assistants

Dental Coverage:

CUPE 3906 provides dental coverage for Classification A Unit 1 members who have a TAship or RAship in lieu of a TAship within the current academic year. Unit 1 consists of Teaching Assistants, Demonstrators, Tutors and Super Tutors, Markers and Research Assistants who have an RAship in lieu of a TAship. Please note that if you are eligible for the CUPE Dental Plan, you are not eligible for the Graduate Students' Association Dental Plan (unless otherwise specified by the GSA). You cannot enroll in GSA dental coverage and opt-out of CUPE 3906 coverage.

Other Coverage:

- Employee Family Assistance Program
- Child Care Reimbursement
- Gender Affirmation Fund
- Reproductive Health Fund
- Health Spending Account

For more information please visit the [CUPE 3906 webpage](#)

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

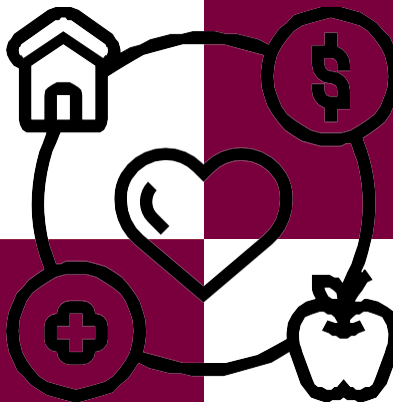
Good 2 Talk:

Good2Talk is a free, confidential helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario, 24/7/365. 1-866-925-5454 or dial 211 and ask to be connected to Good2Talk.



Student Wellness Centre:

The Student Wellness Centre is the place on campus to address your wellness needs. They provide a range of counselling options, medical services and wellness programs so that you can get the most out of your McMaster experience, academically and personally. For more information visit the [Student Wellness Centre website](#)



MACCESS:

MACCESS provides peer support by trained volunteers, with lived experiences with of either disability, chronic illness, mental illness, madness, mental health concerns, and other disabilities.

For more information visit

MACCESS

Empower Me:

No issues are too big or small. Request support for depression, anxiety, grief, relationship problems, adjusting to life in a new country, addictions, mild substance abuse, educational conflict, disordered eating, and more. Though Empower Me, counselors are completely qualified to support students in crisis. What's great about Empower Me is that you don't need to be in crisis in order to take advantage of their services. You could speak to a life coach about subjects like personal performance, well-being and growth, career, relationships, and finances.

Please visit [Empower Me](#) for more information

TECHNOLOGY SERVICES



EMAIL

Every graduate student will receive a McMaster Student email account powered by Microsoft 365. Students are required to activate their McMaster email accounts. Please note that the MAC ID must be activated for the student to have access to their email.



ZOOM

This service is free and you will need to sign in with your McMaster email and your MAC ID and password. Go to Zoom for more information.



AVENUE TO LEARN (A2L)

Avenue to Learn is the learning management system used at McMaster for students and instructors. This is where all of your courses will be housed. It is a place where you can access course information, assignments, instructions, lecture slides and discussions.



MICROSOFT 365

Your McMaster email gives you access to full desktop and mobile versions of Microsoft 365 to install on 5 personal devices. Some of the programs that you are able to install include Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Microsoft License including email will be activated after enrolling. For training dates and details go to Office 365 Hub.



MCMASTER LIBRARY

You are able to access books & journals online, connect to electronic resources, receive a research consultation and seek media creation support via the online website



CRDB (PHCNP ONLY)

CRDB is the administrative management system for the PHCNP programs. Students will access their COUPNP courses in CRDB.

More Information

www.reallygreatsite.com

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

McMaster offers many funding opportunities to those graduate students who demonstrate financial need. Please find information about awards, scholarships and external funding below.

SGS Scholarships & Awards

SGS offers multiple scholarships and awards throughout the year. You can apply to various opportunities such as scholarships, bursaries and work programs using [AwardSpring](#).

With [AwardSpring](#), you can complete one common app that matches you with all the aid & award opportunities you're eligible for. It also tracks the completion of any additional requirements on a user-friendly dashboard.

Department Awards

Only declared full-time Nursing students are eligible to apply for internal awards. These awards are made primarily on the basis of academic qualifications by the Graduate Programs in Health Sciences Scholarship Selection Committee and the Scholarship Committee of Graduate Council. Internal awards will be advertised by e-mail as they become available each year. Students will also receive notification of details by e-mail outlining procedures for applying for these awards.

Dr. Susan E French Nursing Bursary:

Established in 2016 by Dr. Susan French (Class of '02). To be awarded by the School of Graduate Studies to full time students enrolled in the graduate nursing program who demonstrate financial need.

Beverly McPetrie Bursary

Established in 2016 by Beverley McPetrie, BSCN (Class of '61), to encourage students to achieve their goals and be passionate in their work. To be awarded by the school of Graduate studies to students enrolled in the Graduate Nursing Program who demonstrate financial need. Preference to be given to students pursuing the Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner designation.

E.J Rankin Bursary

Established in 2016 from the Estate of Eleanor Jean Rankin (Class of 1983). To be granted to full time undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the School of Nursing who demonstrate financial need. Funding allocation to undergraduate and graduate students to be recommended by the Associate Dean, Nursing

Margaret Black Bursary

Established in 2018 from the Estate of Margaret Ellen Ann Black, former professor in the School of Nursing. To be granted to graduate students enrolled in the School of Nursing who demonstrate financial need.

External Awards

There are many awards funded by sources external to McMaster University including government awards offered by federal and provincial scholarship agencies. A list of these awards can be found on the [SGS Scholarships](#) webpage.

CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarships – Master’s (CGS-M)

The CGS M Awards Program supports students in all research disciplines and is administered jointly by Canada’s three federal granting agencies: the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The selection process and post-award administration are carried out at the university level, under the guidance of the three agencies.

Ontario Graduate Fellowships

Ontario Graduate Fellowships (OGF) provide funding to full-time students in graduate studies at the masters and doctoral level. It’s a merit-based scholarship for students with an A- or above

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral

The Vanier CGS program aims to attract and retain world-class doctoral students to establish Canada as a global centre of excellence in research and higher learning. Vanier Scholars demonstrate both leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies in the social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and/or engineering and health.

It is valued at \$50,000 per year for three years during doctoral studies.

Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents of Canada, and foreign citizens are eligible to apply for this scholarship.

Bursaries & Travel Awards

SGS: Apply for these awards to help fund your travel for research or to present at a conference. Travel awards are not paid upfront, they are reimbursed once the student submits an expense report. For more information visit the [SGS Travel Awards](#) webpage

GSA: The GSA awards a number of travel awards (up to \$500) every semester (Sept-Dec, Jan-Apr, May-Aug) for travel to conferences to present, or to undertake research relevant to their field of study. GSA Travel Awards are funded from the proceeds of the GSA Development Fund, which is sustained by contributions from Graduate Students and the University. Award recipients will be asked to voluntarily contribute a 250-word statement of how this award and travel contributed to their graduate experience, which may be posted on the Graduate Studies and GSA websites and other media sources. For more information visit [the GSA Travel Grants](#) webpage



STUDENT PAYMENTS

The following information has been compiled to assist you in understanding the graduate student payroll system

Direct Deposit:

Student payroll will be made by Direct Bank Deposit. An "Employee Deposit Information" form must be completed, and a voided cheque must be attached. A "Statement of Earnings", is available to download from MOSAIC. You may obtain an application for direct deposit downloadable from the School of Graduate Studies website at: <https://student-accounts.mcmaster.ca/self-service/enroll-in-direct-deposit/>

Please submit to hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca

All students must enroll in direct deposit to receive scholarship and employment payments. This method of payment is mandatory.

Financial Statement

A statement with details of the financial support for the coming academic year will be provided to all paid students in early fall. This is sent to each full-time student (with a copy to the Supervisor) detailing external or internal awards, TA support and any contribution from the supervisor's grant(s). Students who are employed full-time will not receive a financial statement.

Tax Forms

To view your T2202A and T4 Form please go to the the Student Centre tile on Mosaic and click the drop down menu on the Finance section. If you are working at McMaster as a TA you will need to go to the "To employee Self Service" tile on Mosaic to view your T4/T4A tax slip.

Interac E-Transfer:

Non-Research scholarships (entrance scholarships, department scholarship, tri-agency awards) are paid via INTERAC e-transfer to your mcmaster email address.

NURSING EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS

All Nursing students may continue to work if they have discussed their timetable with their supervisor or advisor and the Assistant Dean of the Nursing Program, and all parties have agreed to an arrangement. Accordingly, it is recommended that full-time students who are participating in McMaster-based paid employment should work no more than an average of 20 hours a week to a maximum of 1005 hours in the academic year. Full-time graduate students are responsible to ensure that any employment obligations do not interfere with academic progress and should be aware that employment obligations are not an acceptable basis for unsatisfactory progress. (Sections 2.5.2/2.5.3/2.5.4 of the Graduate Calendar)

IMPORTANT CONTACTS & HELP

Tuition and Fees

Student.accounts@mcmaster.ca

Scholarships and Bank Deposits: SGS

gradpay@mcmaster.ca and graduatescholarships@mcmaster.ca

Employment Income: HR Service Centre

Hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca

Who To Ask For Help?

- 1, Your supervisor or advisor is the first person to contact with academic or personal issues. They carry the overall responsibility for all aspects of your degree work.
2. If your supervisor or advisor is not able to help or is not available then, the Assistant Dean is the next person to approach with academic or personal issues.
3. If the Assistant Dean is not able to help, she may refer you to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). To arrange an appointment with the Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) please contact an Administrative Assistant at ext. 21609

For all aspects of Admissions procedures, information (including Post-Degree), all in-course program related issues, such as course registration, comprehensive examinations, MSc oral defenses and transfers from MSc to PhD, please contact the Nursing Graduate Program at gradson@mcmaster.ca.

NON ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS (NARS)

The Graduate Nursing Program and the Faculty of Health Sciences has specific Health and Safety requirements that all students are required to submit. You are still required to submit updated documents as per the stated deadline regardless on if a student is in clinical placements or is working on their thesis.

Attending to this annual process is your professional responsibility as a student in the School of Nursing, Graduate Program. Students who fail to submit any of the requirements listed by the deadline will be reviewed by the Faculty of Health Sciences Professionalism Committee. Failure to submit on time will be considered a serious professionalism breach and there will be a delay to your academic plan.

Required Annually

- CPR
- N95 Mask Fit Testing Card
- Police Records Check
- TB Risk Assessment Form
- Seasonal Influenza

Required 1st Year Only

- FHS Fire Safety Training
- WHIMIS
- Mask Fit Training Quiz
- AODA Year One



GRADUATE COURSES

Students are advised to take the required core courses for their degree before beginning their electives. Full details of course categories, selection, assignment expectations, terms, deadlines, etc. are provided in the NURSING GRADUATE COURSE SCHEDULE available on MOSAIC. The following is a summary of the important general points.

Registration

All students are required to register using the online Academic Registration (MOSAIC) system. There is a deadline to register and drop courses. If students have completed all their courses, they must still register on MOSAIC. For more information on how to register in courses please visit the How to Enrol webpage on the SGS Website

Required Courses For All Graduate Students

SGS 101 & SGS 201: All graduate students, including part-time students, must complete the online course SGS #101- Academic Research Integrity and Ethics and SGS #201 - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) by September 30 of the first term after their admission to graduate studies at McMaster. The AODA training is readily available through online training modules found at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/index.html>. A graduate student may not obtain a graduate degree at McMaster without having passed these courses. Please see section 2.6.5 of the Graduate Calendar for further information.

Indigenous Milestones: All incoming students to the Graduate Nursing Programs (Masters of Science all streams, PhD and Diplomas) will be required to complete online training related to Indigenous Health and cultural safety in the first term of their program. **Due Date: October 31st.**

SGS 700: Mosaic requires graduate students to enroll in a course in every term. If there is a term in which you are not taking an academic course or if you are in the thesis stage of your program, you must enroll in SGS 700. Students need to add a course before being able to drop the last course in each term.

Please visit the Graduate Nursing Program Communications Hub in A2L for instructions on how to register for mandatory trainings and submission details for Health Screening requirements

Course Term

Normally, half courses run for 12 - 13 weeks, however, they may extend by a week beyond this length and students should arrange to accommodate this schedule.

Note that the instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course (with the exception of the grading and grading breakdown) during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. Students are responsible for finding out about announced changes if they miss class. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to remain informed of any changes.

COURSE POLICIES

2.4 Late Or Missed Assignments/Tests

Late papers or assignments will drop a grade (e.g. A+ to A) for each late day if negotiation has NOT occurred. Papers submitted more than two days late receive an F grade if prior negotiation for late date has NOT occurred. When graded by percentage, the grade on late paper will be reduced by 5% for each day late. Papers submitted more than two days late will receive a grade of zero.

2.5 Re-Grade Policy

If you have a concern related to your grade or the assessment of your performance on one of the course's evaluation measures, as a first step, you are strongly encouraged to first connect with the course instructor and/or the course coordinator to discuss the assigned grade or assessment and work to resolve the issue

The School of Nursing follows the McMaster University Secretariat Student Appeal procedure for Re-Read/Re-Assessment

A Re-Read is when a student questions their grade or the assessment of their performance on a piece of work or a program component and alleges error in the academic assessment of their work on the part of an instructor or a committee. To qualify for a re-read, the piece of work or program component must be worth 10% or more of the final course grade. The results of Form A are final and cannot be appealed.

Adjudication Process: The results shall be considered in accordance with procedures approved by the appropriate faculty. In the absence of an established Faculty policy, the following shall apply A grade change of three (3) points or greater (up or down) on the McMaster twelve-point grading scale.

2.6 Assignment Submissions

All assignments will be submitted through Avenue to Learn by the due date. Please see the policy on Late or Missed Assignments/Tests. It is the responsibility of the student to reach out to their course coordinator if they may not be able to submit their assignment by the due date.

2.7 Attendance Policy

Each course in the School of Nursing Graduate Program has been developed to promote learner engagement. Students are expected to attend all classes of the courses in which they are enrolled. However, if there are times when you are unable to engage or participate, then it is your responsibility for reviewing and understanding the material that has been discussed through either synchronous in-classroom (virtual or in-person) discussions or asynchronous discussion threads in courses that utilize e-learning approaches. If you experience more than one absence, we encourage you to connect with your instructor and/or the course coordinator to arrange a meeting to discuss mutually negotiated strategies for learning the course content.

2.8 Use Of Avenue to Learn

In Graduate Nursing Programs, we use Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components in courses, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used.

Continuation in courses will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor. As a student enrolled in courses, you have been granted permission to access an online learning management system, Avenue to Learn. Avenue to Learn course pages are considered an extension of the classroom and usage is provided as a privilege subject to the same code of conduct expected in a lecture hall. This privilege allows participation in course discussion forums and access to supplementary course materials. Please be advised that all areas of Avenue to Learn, including discussion forums, are owned, and operated by McMaster University. Any content or communications deemed inappropriate by the course instructor (or designated individual) may be removed at his/her discretion.

Per the University Technology Services Code of Conduct, all members of the McMaster community are obligated to use computing resources in ways that are responsible, ethical and professional.

2.9 Use Of Turnitin

Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., online search, etc.).

Turnitin.com Policy,

2.12 Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

As per section 22 of the Code, all students have the following responsibilities:

- a) acting in accordance with the law and this Code;
- b) being acquainted with the relevant related policies as they apply to all students as well as to their specific role(s) within the University;
- c) supporting an environment free from harassment, intimidation, discrimination, assault, and Sexual Violence;
- d) treating others in a way that does not harm them physically and/or threaten or intimidate them emotionally or mentally;
- e) appropriately respecting the personal privacy of other students;
- f) consuming legal substances in a safe and responsible manner; and
- g) complying with any disciplinary measures assigned under this Code and respecting the authority of University officials in the course of their duties.

For further information, please consult McMaster University's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities:

<https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf>

2.13 Course Failure

A student who fails to obtain at least a B-minus grade in a Graduate Course can be asked to withdraw from the Graduate Program. In some cases, the student's Supervisory Committee or Faculty Advisor may advise the Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), that, because of certain circumstances, the student should: a) take an alternative course (does not apply to PHCNP program), or b) repeat the course. Such a recommendation should be made in writing by the Supervisor or Faculty Advisor and Program Assistant Dean to the Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), within one month of the student's grade being announced, outlining the possible reasons for the failure. The Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) will consider this request and recommend a course of action for consideration by the Faculty's Graduate Admissions and Study Committee.

2.14 Course Grading

Student performance at the course level is quite straightforward. Each course has its own criteria that are usually based on assignments, papers, and class participation. A letter grade is awarded by the course coordinator. The grading system is outlined below. If a student receives a grade below B-, a recommendation may be made for the student to withdraw from the program.

A+	90 to 100	consistently outstanding
A	85 to 89	overall superior quality
A-	80 to 84	high achievement
B+	77 to 79	competent, but not consistently high quality
B	73 to 76	satisfactory quality
B-	70 to 72	only marginally acceptable
F	failure	inadequate work

2.15 Course Availability

Nursing students normally take graduate courses offered within Nursing and other Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate programs (for instance Public Health, Rehab Sciences, E-Health, Health Research Methodology, and Clinical Behavioral Sciences Graduate Diploma Program). Occasionally, it may be necessary for a student's progress to take a course at another Ontario university if a similar course is not available at McMaster. This requires special permission of the host institution and McMaster. In those cases, the Visiting Graduate Student Plan permits a student registered at a University in Ontario to take a graduate course at another Ontario University (Host University) without completing further admission formalities. Students are limited to take one half course through OVGs. For further detail, consult the Graduate Program Office and go to the website at: <http://cou.on.ca/key-issues/education/graduate-education/ontario-visiting-grad-students/> . For advanced credit and determination of course equivalency see the SGS Calendar, section 2.3

2.17 Course Cancellation Policy

The Nursing Graduate Program has a policy of offering courses with a minimum of six registered students. In some cases, (i.e., a new course) we may offer the course with fewer students; however, this decision would be made in consultation with the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Program.

Process to follow: The course coordinator keeps in touch with the Health Sciences Graduate Program prior to the commencement of the term. If there are only a few students registered (e.g. three), the following steps can be taken:

The Assistant Dean's office can circulate an e-mail to Graduate Nursing students encouraging them to register (approximately one month before the course begins).

If a course continues to have low registration, the Assistant Dean's office can circulate an e-mail to Graduate Nursing students and/or other departments/via assistant deans encouraging students to register (approximately 2-3 weeks before the course begins).

Canceling the course: If steps a) and b) do not result in sufficient numbers, the course coordinator, in consultation with the Assistant Dean will determine when to cancel the course. Consideration needs to be given to those registered students who need to find an alternate course in the event of cancellation. The Nursing Graduate Office needs to be informed so that the course is removed from MOSAIC.

MASTERS OF SCIENCE: COURSE BASED

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in the MSc Course-Based Program must complete a minimum of eight graduate half courses, which must include the four required courses:

-
- NUR 701
- NUR 706
- NUR 707
- NUR 711.

The remaining courses will be chosen by the student with the approval of their faculty advisor. With the permission of the course instructor and faculty advisor, a student's minimum course requirements may include up to two 600-level graduate half courses.

Program Duration:

Full-Time: Full-Time Students typically complete the degree requirements in two years and the permissible time for completing is limited to three years from initial registration in the Master's program

Part-Time: Part time students typically complete the degree requirements in three years and the permissible time is limited to five years from their initial registration.

Faculty Advisor:

Course-based masters' student will have a faculty advisor assigned in the fall of their first year, by the Assistant Dean, who will aid the student during their time in the program. The faculty advisor is responsible for meeting with the student at the time that the student first registers and then again on a regular basis (i.e. within a maximum of 6 months from the time that the student enters the Program and every 6 months thereafter unless the faculty advisor believes that more frequent meetings are required).

The faculty advisor's responsibilities will include:

- Planning and approving the student's program of courses;
- Maintaining knowledge of the student's progress;
- Providing the student with regular appraisals of progress or lack of it (i.e. the student and advisor have an obligation to meet regularly);

Advisors provide comments and sign the education plan on an annual basis and submit this form to the nursing graduate office electronically. This form is available on Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program Communication site.

Faculty members who agree to advise graduate students are responsible for the guidance of these students and are not permitted to transfer students to non-graduate faculty. If a course-based MSc student elects to change to the thesis-based MSc option, they would be expected to be assigned a supervisor and supervisory committee (see item 4 of this section).

Education Plan

Each incoming student must complete an Education Plan Form, which is found online on the Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program Communication site within one month of enrolling in their program. The Education Plan outlines the intended course selection and identifies timelines for completion of course requirements. Please submit completed Education Plans to Avenue to Learn. The Education Plan should be updated annually (in the fall) and submitted on Avenue to Learn.

MASTERS OF SCIENCE: COURSE BASED/ PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in the MSc/ PHCNP program complete the three core graduate courses and one graduate elective:

- NUR 706
- NUR 707
- NUR 712
- Graduate Elective

In addition to: seven courses offered through the COUPN NP Consortium

- NUR 761: Pathophysiology
- NUR762: Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnosis I
- NUR763: Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnosis II
- NUR 764: Therapeutics in Primary Health Care I
- NUR 765: Therapeutics in Primary Health Care II
- NUR 766: Roles and Responsibilities
- NUR 767: Integrative Practicum

For more information about the NP courses, see http://np_education.ca

Additional Requirements

Prior to starting clinical placements in the Fall of year 2 all PHCNP students are required to complete the below workshops and OSCE scheduled at the end of August and throughout September.

- Health Assessment Workshops
- Head to Toe OSCE
- Pelvic Exam Workshop
- Suture Workshop

Dates and details provided at a later date

Program Duration:

Two Years: The three core courses and elective (plus NUR766) will be completed in year one, and the six remaining consortium courses will be completed in year two. The permissible time for completion of a master's degree is limited to two years full time. Once the PHCNP courses have been completed successfully, students are eligible to write their RN (Extended Class) exams

Education Plan

Each incoming student must complete an Education Plan Form, which is found online on the Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program Communication site within one month of enrolling in their program. The Education Plan outlines the intended course selection and identifies timelines for completion of course requirements. Please submit completed Education Plans to Avenue to Learn.

MASTERS OF SCIENCE: COURSE BASED/ PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER



Faculty Advisor:

Course-based/PHCNP masters' student will have a faculty advisor assigned in the fall of their first year, by the Assistant Dean, who will aid the student during their time in the program. The faculty advisor is responsible for meeting with the student at the time that the student first registers and then again on a regular basis (i.e. within a maximum of 6 months from the time that the student enters the Program and every 6 months thereafter unless the faculty advisor believes that more frequent meetings are required).

The faculty advisor's responsibilities will include:

- Planning and approving the student's program of courses;
- Maintaining knowledge of the student's progress;
- - Providing the student with regular appraisals of progress or lack of it (i.e. the student and advisor have an obligation to meet regularly);
- Advisors provide comments and sign the education plan on an annual basis and submit this form to the nursing graduate office electronically. This form is available on Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program Communication site

Faculty members who agree to advise graduate students are responsible for the guidance of these students and are not permitted to transfer students to non-graduate faculty. If a course-based MSc student elects to change to the thesis-based MSc option, they would be expected to be assigned a supervisor and supervisory committee (see item 4 of this section).

MASTERS OF SCIENCE: THESIS-STREAM

Education Plan

Each incoming student to the thesis-based program will develop an education plan, with their Thesis Supervisor, (1) to plan the course selection for their terms in the program, (2) to name the membership of their supervisory committee, (3) to provide a brief statement of the students' intended thesis topic, and (4) to provide the date of the first supervisory committee meeting, which must take place within six months of enrolment in the program. NOTE - The Assistant Dean of Nursing Graduate Studies is invited to attend the first thesis committee meeting.

The Education Plan Form, is available on the Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program site and must be completed within the first month of the program. Please upload this form on Avenue to Learn. The Education Plan should be updated annually and uploaded onto Avenue to Learn

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in the thesis-based MSc are required to complete a minimum of 6 graduate half courses which must include the five required courses:

- NUR 701
- NUR 707
- NUR 709
- NUR 715
- NUR 745

In addition, students are required to complete a thesis and defend it at a final oral examination.

Program Duration:

Full-Time: Full-Time Students typically complete the degree requirements in two years and the permissible time for completing is limited to three years from initial registration in the Master's program

Part-Time: Part time students typically complete the degree requirements in three years and the permissible time is limited to five years from their initial registration.



MASTERS OF SCIENCE: THESIS-STREAM

MSC. THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE

Areas for Acceptable Thesis Topics: The Master's degree must provide a demonstration of competence on the part of the student as an independent investigator. Students are required to explore a topic in considerable depth, to write up the findings and to defend these findings at an oral examination. The thesis will be a coherent document that provides a complete and systematic account of the research accomplished by the writer.

Thesis Proposal Approval Process

- 1. Student along with their thesis supervisor select a topic of their choice for the thesis.**
- 2. Thesis proposal is drafted by the student. Students should follow the Guidelines for Thesis Proposal in Section 3 below.**
- 3. Proposal is submitted to the remainder of the committee, student may choose to give it to their thesis supervisor prior to this for comments.**
- 4. Final email approval of proposals should be documented and retained in the student file by supervisor.**
- 5. Once the proposal has been accepted by the Supervisory Committee it must go forward for ethical appraisal.**

To assist with processing student research projects in a timely manner, a subcommittee of the Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (HIREB) will review all proposed student projects at the Master's level. This sub-committee is through the Office of Research Services.

For more information about HIREB guidelines as they pertain to students see:

<https://hireb.ca/guidelines/students/>

Please also note that students who are collecting data while a Masters student must complete and have signed the "Working Alone Policy", located on the FHS Safety Office web site.

http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/forms_and_records.html.

Guidelines for Master's thesis proposal

Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a kind of contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis. Well-formulated thesis proposals should be about 15 to 30 double-spaced manuscript pages. While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the proposals in general should include the following elements:

Guidelines for Master's thesis proposal

Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a kind of contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis. Well-formulated thesis proposals should be about 15 to 30 double-spaced manuscript pages. While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the proposals in general should include the following elements:

- A clear **introductory statement** of the problem to be researched. The reason for proposing the research must be stated.
- A brief, **critical review** of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. Although students often produce literature reviews for their proposals that constitute the literature-review chapter of their thesis, this practice is not in general desirable. The focus of the thesis proposal should properly be on the proposed research, and the literature review should in general be substantially briefer than the review chapter of the thesis. (Length suggestion: 5-10 pages.)
- A detailed **statement of the problem** to be researched, including research questions to be addressed or hypotheses to be tested. The nature of this section will depend upon the style of work of the thesis and will, for example, generally be worked out in greater detail for a statistical study than for research employing methods of participant observation. (Length suggestion: 2-5 pages.)
- A description of the **research methods** to be employed in the thesis, and the way they will be employed. It is insufficient, for example, to say that a survey will be conducted (of what population? with what questionnaire?); that data will be analyzed by regression analysis (of which variables?); or that participant observation will be employed (of what group? to what end?) It is important to keep the data-collection plan realistic and within the means of the student. In quantitative research it is often better to use existing data sources, even when these do not precisely reflect the student's interests, than to collect inadequate data of one's own. This is the most important part of the proposal, because it concretely describes the research to be undertaken. (Length suggestion: 6-12 pages.)
- **Research "instruments,"** such as questionnaires or interview schedules, should be appended to the proposal. (These are not included in the 15-30 page guideline for length.)
- A **tentative chapter outline**, with chapter titles and one-sentence descriptions. (Length suggestion: 1-2 pages.)
- A **tentative schedule of work**, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic. (Length suggestion: 1 page.)

MASTERS OF SCIENCE: THESIS-STREAM

MSC. THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE

Master's Thesis Preparation

All students should familiarize themselves with the [Completing your Degree](#) webpage on the School of Graduate Studies website when they are getting close to completing their degree.

The online booklet "[Guide for the Preparation of Master's and Doctoral Theses](#)", on the School of Graduate Studies website explains the style and format preferred by the School.

The customary format for the MSc thesis is the traditional integrated document. Many examples of successfully defended theses of this type are available for inspection in the Health Sciences Library.

I – 3 Months Prior to Defense : Work with the supervisor and committee members on Final Draft of Thesis

The Supervisor and Supervisory Committee review the draft and make whatever recommendations they feel are necessary. It is often useful for the Supervisor, Supervisory Committee and the student to get together to obtain a common understanding of what changes in the first draft are necessary for an acceptable subsequent document. If the recommendations for change are at all contentious or detailed, the student is entitled to a written statement from his committee outlining exactly what must be done. When the student has presented a final draft which each of the Supervisory Committee members concludes is an acceptable document, the committee will confirm this and give the student permission to book a date for the thesis defense. The final version of the thesis generally does not exceed 150 pages (type-written, double spaced, letter-size paper), including all figures, tables, references and appendices. The student may wish to hold a practice defense and arrangements can be made through the Administrative Assistant of the Assistant Dean.

Minimum Three Weeks before Defense: Send Approval to Submit MSc Thesis Form to gradson@mcmaster.ca with the Assistant Dean and thesis supervisor cc'd.

The student obtains the "APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A MASTER'S THESIS" form from the Graduate Nursing Program Communication Hub and must complete and return to the Nursing Graduate Program Office (gradson@mcmaster.ca or HSC2J41) a minimum of three weeks before the expected date of the defense. You should indicate on this form the date for which your committee is available for the defense.

Please note that the majority of members of the Supervisory Committee must have approved the thesis by signing this form before the oral defense can be arranged. The Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Studies, selects the external examiner from a list of three candidates provided by the student and Supervisor. The external examiner is usually a member of graduate faculty whose research interests may lie outside the student's immediate area of research

Minimum Two Weeks before Dense Date: Submit a copy of your thesis to the Nursing Graduate Program – gradson@mcmaster.ca

The student must submit a copy of the thesis to the Nursing Graduate Program, which will be sent electronically to all examiners including an external examiner at least two weeks before the MSc defense.

After Defense: When the student has successfully completed their oral examination and has made all required revisions to the thesis.

- License to McMaster form to be signed and submitted to gradson@mcmaster.ca *Nursing Graduate Office will provide students with this form*
- Final Thesis Submission form provided to student by Nursing Graduate Office, to be signed and returned.

Prior to Thesis Submission to MacSphere

All thesis students must have their final thesis submitted to a plagiarism software. Prior to submission of the final thesis to MacSphere, it must be uploaded to the 'Final Thesis Submission' assignment in the A2L course shell 'Graduate Nursing Program Communication Hub'.

After the this has been submitted in A2L please contact gradson@mcmaster.ca for the results prior to uploading the thesis in MacSphere.

Submission to MacSphere: When the student has successfully completed their oral examination and has made all required revisions to the thesis as recommended by his/her examining committee, they must file an electronic version of their final thesis to "MacSphere". Additional information on thesis preparation and submission can be found on the SGS website:

A student may choose to have their thesis bound for themselves and one for their supervisor. The cost of binding is borne by the student, not by the University.

The Oral Defense

The Master's thesis defense is organized by the Nursing Graduate Program. When the student is getting ready to defend, the student and supervisor should contact the Assistant Dean meet and review the process for the defense.

The Examination Committee consists of a minimum of four graduate faculty members, of which at least three are members of the student's Supervisory Committee. The Assistant Dean Nursing Graduate Studies will appoint one member (not the student's supervisor or the external examiner) to chair the examination. The MSc defense will be open to the Faculty of Health Sciences community.

The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room in order to discuss the format of the examination and the responsibilities of the examiners. The examination will consist of an oral overview (15 - 20 minutes) of the thesis given by the student, followed by a series of questions asked by the members of the Examination Committee in turn. All examiners are expected to ask at least one relevant question. At the end of the defense, the Examination Committee will consider their decision in closed session. The Examination Chair does not normally have voting privileges. The majority rules in case of a split vote but if there is a "tie" then the Chair must vote to break the "tie". The Chair will then call the student into the room to give the committee's decision.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE (PhD)

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in the PhD program are required to complete a minimum of 4 graduate half courses which must include

- NUR 700
- NUR 707.
- Elective or NUR 701
- Elective

Students who did not complete a course equivalent to NUR 701 in the Master's program must do so in their PhD program.

Electives should be chosen in consultation with their Supervisor, to complement the thesis research. Students must also complete an approved research methods half course and a statistics course if such courses were not taken as part of their master's degree. Students may choose to take additional courses, and this should also be negotiated with their supervisor.

Program Duration:

Full-Time: Completion of the PhD degree is normally limited to six years from initial registration into the full-time program, although students typically complete the program within four years.

Students who have been registered as full-time for longer than the normal period of funding eligibility (four calendar years) will automatically be assessed for discounted fees (currently equal to part-time).

Part-Time: The time for completion of the PhD program for those admitted to a part-time program is normally limited to eight years from initial registration at McMaster as a PhD student.

Education Plan

Each incoming student to the PhD programs will develop an education plan, with their Supervisor, (1) to plan the course selection for their terms in the program, (2) name the membership of their supervisory committee, (3) provide a brief statement of the students' intended thesis topic, and (4) provide the date of the first supervisory committee meeting, which must take place within six months of enrolment in the program. The Education Plan Form, available in the Graduate Nursing Communications Hub and must be completed within the first three months prior to the first meeting of the Supervisory Committee. Please upload completed Education Plans to Avenue to Learn and update on a yearly basis.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE (PHD)

PhD Thesis Work

Selection of Thesis Topic

After careful consideration, the Student and Supervisory Committee must agree on the topic of the thesis proposal that will be of interest and value to the Student and which merits independent study. Topic selection and committee approval must be completed within the first 9 months from the start of the program for full time students and within the first 12 months from the start of the program for part time students.

The topic will constitute the focus of the PhD thesis-related work. The proposal can be situated within larger research programs of Supervisors, but the proposal may not be identical to any of the grants held or submitted by Supervisors in the department.

Responsibility for ensuring that the proposed research is genuinely novel rests initially with the Student and Supervisor. If students' work is situated within a program of research of the Supervisor, clear justification for this course of action must be provided, in addition to detailed explanation about how the students' contributions will be unique.

The Thesis Proposal for Comprehensive Examination

In the PhD program, the evaluation of the written thesis proposal and oral defense of the proposed research forms the basis of the comprehensive exam. Students and supervisors should arrange to meet with the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate program to review the process for this examination.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Examination

It is a university regulation that students must pass the comprehensive examination as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Normally after the required courses are completed and normally before beginning data collection for the thesis, students in the nursing doctoral program will complete the comprehensive examination process.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is to evaluate the doctoral student's ability to acquire and critically appraise and synthesize information on an argued thesis topic, to apply and integrate a conceptual framework or theory as a basis for examination of the variables under study, derived logically from the evidence review, to formulate a hypothesis or research question addressing an outstanding question in the field, and to design a proposal to carry out the proposed research. The comprehensive examination process should ideally result in publishable papers.

The comprehensive examination consists of two components evaluated together: 1) A written thesis proposal, including introduction and background, problem statement and research questions, comprehensive literature review, conceptual framing or theoretical background, research design and methods, plan for data analyses, feasibility and timeline; and 2) An oral defense of the proposal which includes an examination committee. The rationale for these two components (written and oral) is that to be successful in the PhD program, students must be able to develop a detailed proposal that is with sound logic of argument; and that is rigorous, appropriately situated or framed, conceptually; innovative; feasible; and defensible.

Timing of the Examination

Normally, full-time students are expected to complete the comprehensive examination between the 12th and 18th month, and for part-time students, by the 24th to 36th month following the start of their doctoral studies. Usually, students complete the required courses before beginning the comprehensive examination process. Failure to successfully complete the comprehensive examination within 24 months for full-time students, and within 36 for part-time students, will require withdrawal from the program. The student must have had at least one official Supervisory committee meeting and an educational plan submitted to the Office of Nursing Graduate Studies before beginning the comprehensive process.

Timeline to Examination:

The Supervisory Committee is responsible for determining the readiness of the written proposal to be put forward for examination by examiners external to the committee. Regular Supervisory committee meetings should be planned to monitor the progress of proposal development and to provide regular feedback. The minimum requirement for meetings is one per term. It is expected that students will meet regularly with their supervisors, between committee meetings, as they work on their proposals.

By the 18th month of the full-time student's program, at the latest, or the 24th month of the part time student's program, the Supervisory committee must propose a tentative, projected date for the oral defense of the thesis proposal to the Assistant Dean of the Nursing Graduate Program. The Supervisory committee will recommend potential examiners (two are needed) to the Assistant Dean for approval. The proposal will be due to the approved examiners three weeks prior to the date of the defense, once booked.

Once the date of the defense has been set, if a student fails to complete the proposal in time the student will be considered to have failed the first attempt at the defense. After a second failure to submit the proposal on time, the student will be considered to have failed the comprehensive exam and will be asked to withdraw from the PhD Program.

Part I of The Comprehensive Exam: The Written Proposal

Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. Recommended page lengths are provided for general guidance. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a kind of contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

or the comprehensive exam, the written proposal is evaluated by external examiners only (see the Nursing Graduate Program website for Comprehensive Examination Forms). By putting the student forward for the oral defense, it is assumed the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee approve the proposal. Students should submit the written proposal to the Graduate Nursing Program and provide a copy to the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee.

Students will receive examiner evaluation of the written proposal and feedback to consider for the oral examination from the Graduate Nursing Program one week prior to the oral exam. This evaluation and feedback will be shared with the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee.

The written thesis proposal elements should include:

- A clear **introductory statement** of the problem to be researched. The reason for proposing the research, the role of nursing and potential impact must be stated. (Length: up to a maximum 5 pages)
- A **comprehensive, critical appraisal, review and synthesis** of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. (Length: up to a maximum 20 pages)
- Application and integration of a **conceptual framework or theory** (Length: up to a maximum 5 pages)
- A detailed **statement of the problem** to be researched, including research questions to be addressed or hypotheses to be tested. The nature of this section will depend upon the style of work of the thesis and will, for example, generally be worked out in greater detail for a statistical study than for research employing methods of participant observation. (Length: up to a maximum of 5 pages.)
- A detailed description of the **research methods** to be employed in the thesis, with sound justification and related ethical considerations, and the way they will be employed. (Length: up to a maximum of 10 pages)
- A tentative **schedule of work**, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. (Length: 1 page)
- Identification of potential **sources of funding**
- **Research "instruments,"** such as questionnaires or interview schedules, should be appended to the proposal. A tentative chapter outline, with chapter titles and one-sentence descriptions

Part 2 of The Comprehensive Exam: The Oral Defense of the Proposal

The evaluation of the written proposal and communication about the oral defense of the proposal (including date, time, and room location) to the student, Supervisory Committee and external examiners will be organized through the Graduate Nursing Program.

The student will be expected to present and defend the thesis proposal. This includes providing reasoned arguments in support of the area under study, a demonstration of the ability to use the information acquired in the literature search and defend the hypotheses or research questions formulated, and rationalization of the weaknesses and strengths of the study methods and identifying appropriate strategies to address limitations.

Students should plan to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the oral examination.

The oral examination will consist of the following steps:

A notice will be placed on the door of the examination room noting that an examination is in progress and that no one can enter the room once the examination has begun.

Before commencing the oral examination, the Chair will brief the Examiners in a closed session on the examination process and evaluations.

The Chair then brings the candidate into the room, and introduces the candidate and the examination committee. The Chair reviews the guidelines about observers and consequences: they may not participate in the oral examination; they are present only as observers. Should any observer ask a question or make a comment during the examination, they will be asked to leave the room.

The Chair will ask the candidate to present the proposal. This should last no more than 20 minutes. Visual aids may be used, and notes consulted. The session will be closed after the presentation is delivered.

The Chair will then instruct the candidate to defend the proposal by responding to questions posed by the examiners and the Supervisory Committee. The examiners and members will pose questions in sequence, beginning with the examiners. Normally two rounds of questioning will be allowed and not more than two hours, in total, should be spent on the defense process. Since the prime purpose of the examination is to assess the student's ability to synthesize and critically evaluate knowledge, the questions should reflect this purpose.

One of the Chair's roles is to ensure that the examination takes place in a constructive atmosphere. The Chair does not question the candidate but may rephrase questions asked by the Examiners.

The candidate withdraws from the examination room after the proposal has been examined so that the examiners can independently rate the presentation.

After the examination, the Chair secures the evaluations of the Examiners and committee members on the form provided; the Chair does not provide an evaluation. (Criteria for Evaluation of the Oral Presentation are in Appendix). To pass, no more than one negative evaluation is permitted; abstentions are not allowed. In the case of two or more negative evaluations, the student will be given a second opportunity to take the examination, which must occur within two weeks of the failure.

In order to receive a “Pass with Distinction”, there must be unanimous agreement among all Examiners that the written proposal and oral defense of the proposal meet these criteria. Only the external examiners can provide input into whether the written proposal passed with distinction.

The candidate is invited back into the room, at which time the Chair summarizes the oral feedback.

Within one week after the oral examination, the Chair prepares a written summary of the evaluation of the written and oral examination and sends it to the candidate and their Supervisor, the Examiners, and the Assistant Dean of the Graduate Nursing Program, with a copy to the School of Graduate Studies

Composition and Duties of the Examination Committee (Oral Defense)

The examining committee will consist of two examiners external to the Supervisory committee, all members of the Supervisory committee and the Supervisor. The Assistant Dean will secure appropriate external examiners, after taking into consideration those suggested by the Supervisory Committee. The Assistant Dean will also assign a Chair for the Oral Defense. The final selection will be based upon the expertise and availability of the faculty suggested by the Supervisory committee. In the case of a re-examination, different external examiners will be secured.

Quorum will be constituted by the Supervisor plus another committee member and an external examiner.

During the oral examination, the examining committee is expected to ask questions related to the topic of the thesis proposal, and the strengths and weaknesses of the study plan. The examination committee should ask questions that probe the depth of the student’s knowledge and require the student to use critical thinking and reasoning.

Only two attempts at the Comprehensive Examination are permitted under any circumstances. If a student fails both attempts at the Comprehensive Examination, the student will be requested to withdraw from the PhD Program. However, a student who has transferred from the MSc Program may be permitted to complete their MSc degree, if a petition for special consideration to permit this is supported by the Supervisor and the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Program and approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences).

Composition Of the Re-Examination Committee

If a candidate's first attempt is considered unsatisfactory, either the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Program, or a senior faculty member delegate, must attend the candidate's second proposal defense attempt as no further attempts can be permitted. In either case, he/she will not take part in the examination and will not vote on the candidate's performance. He/she may be asked by the Examination Committee to comment during discussions of the 2nd examination outcome.

The Examination Chair (Oral Defense)

The Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Program will assign a chair of the oral defense. The chair will ensure that the rules governing the conduct of the proposal defense are observed by both the examiners and the student.

The Chair must ensure that the defense takes place in a constructive atmosphere and that the Examiners' questions are both pertinent (i.e. fall within the boundaries of the topic) and sufficiently probing. The Chair may also question the candidate. He/she may wish to rephrase questions/ answers for clarification or bring a line of questioning to a close if the limits of a student's knowledge or understanding have been reached. The Chair also makes brief notes of the examiners' questions and of the student's responses.

Note: Once students have successfully completed the comprehensive examination, they continue to use the designation PhD (student). Since PhD students at McMaster do not undergo candidacy examinations, the designation (C) for Candidate after the title PhD is not appropriate.

PhD Thesis Requirements and Defense

All students should familiarize themselves with information on the Completing your Thesis webpage on the School of Graduate Studies website when they are getting close to completing their degree.

A PhD student is expected to prepare a thesis that embodies the results of original research and mature scholarship.

Thesis Proposal Approval Process

See the Comprehensive Examination Process above for more information about the Proposal Development and Approval process. PhD students must submit their proposal for full review by the Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (HiREB).

Preparation Of the Thesis

Students should review The "Guide for the Preparation of Master's and Doctoral Theses" . This explains the style and format preferred by the School. Although the customary format for the PhD thesis is the traditional integrated document, students may choose to prepare a Sandwich Thesis.

Defense Process

The Students Guide to the PhD Thesis Defense Process is found on the Completing your Doctoral Degree webpage on School of Graduate Studies website at

Final Draft: The Supervisor and Supervisory Committee review the draft and make whatever recommendations they feel are necessary. It is often useful for the Supervisor, Supervisory Committee, and the student to get together to obtain a common understanding of what changes in the first draft are necessary for an acceptable subsequent document. If the recommendations for change are at all contentious or detailed, the student can request a written statement from his committee outlining exactly what must be done. When the student has presented a final draft which each of the Supervisory Committee members concludes is an acceptable document, the committee will confirm this and give the student permission to book a date for the thesis defense. As a rule, the final version of the thesis does not exceed 300 pages (type-written, double spaced, letter-size paper) manuscript pages.

Request to Defend: When the final version of the thesis has been accepted by the Supervisory Committee, the student (after consultation with their supervisor) will submit their request to defend on the on-line Thesis Defense System (TDS). The student will receive a confirmation email (to their McMaster email account) with a secure link to complete the thesis title and the estimated date to submit their thesis for examination to the School of Graduate Studies (usually four weeks from the date of the initial request to defend). Once the student has submitted this information, the supervisor will receive an email with a secure link to complete the “Nomination of an External Examiner to the Dean of Graduate Studies” electronic form. See <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/doctoral-degree/> for further information.

Approval to Defend: The supervisor (after consultation with the Supervisory Committee) will complete and submit this form online for the approval of all the committee members and program Chair. Potential examiners should be chosen for their expertise in the student’s research and must not be recent collaborators of the supervisory committee members. From this list of recommended examiners, the School will contact an examiner and secure her/his agreement to read the thesis. Once selected the Supervisor must not contact potential examiners.

Defense Date & Thesis Submission: When the Nominations for External Examiners have been approved online by the supervisory committee and Chair, the student will receive a “Ready to Propose a Defense Date” email (with a secure link) to complete the “Submission of a Doctoral Thesis for Examination and Identification of a Date for Oral Defense” form on-line. The student must submit their thesis to gthesis@mcmaster.ca. Once SGS has received the submitted thesis, the student can submit the date and time of defense, which should be pre-approved by their supervisory committee. Once submitted, the committee will receive an email that will link them to the submission form to approve the date and time of defense. In addition, each member will indicate that they have read and judged the thesis in the form in which it is to be submitted. This should occur no later than 4 weeks before the defense before the anticipated defense. The Academic Services Officer at the School of Graduate Studies (GH-212) and the Nursing Graduate Officer (HSC2J41) will be informed of the student’s request to defend via email and will have access to the on-line process. The School will assume that the Supervisory Committee members already have copies of the thesis.

The PhD defense is organized by the School of Graduate Studies (GH-212). For more information concerning any details of thesis defense, please see the <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/doctoral-degree/>

Examination Committee & Examination Chair

The Examination Committee will consist of the supervisor, some or all of the other Supervisory Committee members, the external examiner (if he/she wishes to attend) and the Examination Chair plus one representative of the faculty at large (if the external attends, no representative of the faculty is required). The Chair and the faculty representative may be members of the School of Nursing if they are at arm's length from the Supervisor. The School of Graduate Studies will send a copy of the thesis to each internal examiner and will also send one copy to an external examiner suggested by the Supervisory Committee. The latter is given one month to read the thesis. The external examiner will report back to the School whether the thesis is acceptable for defense. If it is acceptable, the School of Graduate Studies will confirm the date and time and will arrange the location for the examination. The identity of the external examiner is not revealed to the student without that individual's permission.

A PhD Examination Chair, appointed by and representing the Dean of Graduate Studies, will oversee the PhD defense; the Examination Chair does not have voting privileges. The examination is normally open to all University faculty and students. The examination is conducted in essentially the same manner as described for the MSc defense (see above). Any questions posed by the external examiner who is unable to attend the examination will be asked by either the supervisor or the Chair in proxy.

Plagiarism Check

Prior to the thesis defense and, in the case of a doctoral thesis, before sending out the draft to the external examiner, the entire document must be reviewed for its originality using the University's paid subscription to Urkund. The program/supervisor will review the originality report generated by Urkund and either recommend changes to the document or approve it for the defence. A thesis may not be seen by the thesis examining committee (including the external reviewer in the case of a doctoral thesis) until the Urkund generated report was reviewed and approved by the supervisor or the program, unless authorized by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

After Defense

When the student has successfully completed their oral examination and has made all required revisions to the thesis

- Submit License to McMaster form to the Nursing Graduate Office gradson@mcmaster.ca
- Submit Final Thesis Submission form to the Nursing Graduate Office gradson@mcmaster.ca

Submission to MacSphere

When the student has successfully completed their oral examination and has made all required revisions to the thesis as recommended by their examining committee, they must file an electronic version of their final thesis to MacSphere. Additional information on thesis preparation and submission can be found on the [SGS website](#):

A student may choose to have their thesis bound for themselves and one for their supervisor. The cost of binding is borne by the student, not by the University.

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF SANDWICH THESES

A sandwich thesis consists of material that is previously published or prepared for publication as one or more journal articles or parts of books. Only PhD students are eligible to submit sandwich theses. If planning to prepare a sandwich thesis, please refer to the [University Guidelines](#) for specific details.

Note These guidelines meet the requirements of the McMaster University School of Graduate Studies and have been summarized here so that all graduate faculty and students in the Nursing and Health Research Methodology are aware of the sandwich thesis option.



SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The Supervisory Committee

Students in the thesis-based MSc and the PhD programs will have confirmed their Supervisor prior to admission to their Program. The Supervisor, assisted by the Supervisory Committee, provides leadership and guidance to the student throughout the time the student is registered in the Program.

The Supervisor is responsible for assembling a Supervisory Committee, and this is generally done after discussion with the student. The committee should be balanced in terms of background and experience related to the thesis topic and the student. The committee must meet with the student within a maximum of six months from the time that the student first registers in the Program. The committee consists of the Supervisor, who will chair the committee, and at least two other members of graduate faculty from McMaster University, one of whom must be an approved member of the Nursing Faculty. Additional committee members may be added as required. A non-graduate faculty member may be invited to join the Supervisory Committee (as an optional fourth member) at the discretion of the Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). The appointment of 4th members who are not faculty members of McMaster University requires permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Committee Meetings:

The Assistant Dean Nursing Graduate must attend the first supervisory committee meeting as a non-voting observer to acquaint herself/himself with the student and members of the committee. At the first committee meeting, the student should provide a brief overview of her/his background, career goals and thesis plan, since this is often the first time all members of the supervising committee will be together. It is also useful to review the expertise that each member of the Supervisory Committee brings to the committee. The Supervisory Committee should also review the Education Plan and discuss timelines for completion of the program requirements. After the first meeting, each student is expected to meet with his/her Supervisory Committee once every six months unless the committee believes that more frequent meetings are necessary. A Supervisory Committee meeting may be particularly important if the student is having difficulties with the research project. On these occasions, an extraordinary meeting can be called by either the supervisor or the student.

SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Reports:

It is the responsibility of both the supervisor and student to ensure that Supervisory Committee meetings take place and are officially recorded BY COMPLETING A SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT FORM AT EACH MEETING. Different forms are used for MSc and PhD programs.

On the report, each committee member must indicate whether the progress made by the student respecting course work and thesis research has been 'excellent', 'satisfactory', 'marginal' or 'unsatisfactory' (MSc form) or 'excellent', 'good', 'marginal' or 'unsatisfactory' (PhD report). If a 'marginal' or 'unsatisfactory' rating is given by any one member, another committee meeting must be held within three months to re-assess the student's progress; the Graduate Program Assistant Dean may be invited to attend this meeting (as a non-voting member) at the invitation of either the student or the supervisor. Further action, that may include withdrawal from the program, is required if ratings continue to be unsatisfactory.

For PhD students, the supervisory committee reports are generated electronically through Mosaic. Please contact the Graduate Program Officer at gradson@mcmaster.ca to initiate this process 2 weeks prior to the committee meeting date. The form is circulated electronically to the student, supervisor, and committee members and then to the Graduate Nursing Program for review by the Assistant Dean.

The original report form must be completed and submitted to the Nursing Graduate Program (electronically) after each committee meeting.



TRANSFER PROCESS



From Thesis - Based To Course - Based Msc

Students may request to transfer from the thesis-based to the course-based MSc, after consultation with their Supervisor, and after completion of the three foundation courses (NUR701, NUR715, NUR745). The student must write a letter of request to transfer to the Assistant Dean of Nursing Graduate Program. A letter of support from the supervisor must accompany the student's letter.

From The Course-Based To Thesis Stream Msc Option

Transferring from the course-based to thesis-based option requires a letter of request from the student to the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Program, with a letter of support from the Advisor (Course-based). Students requesting to move from course to thesis-based must also have a letter from a supervisor indicating willingness to supervise the MSc Thesis.

From Msc To Phd Stream

Students in the MSc stream with the support of the Supervisory Committee or Advisor may request transfer to PhD status without completion of the MSc Degree. The objectives of the transfer process are to a) to assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research and b) to consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to PhD program.

Students and supervisors who are interested in transfer to PhD, should contact the Nursing Graduate Program at least four months prior to potential transfer. A review of requirements and prerequisites will occur at this time. Transfer to PhD should happen no sooner than two terms and no later than 22 months after initial registration in a Master's program (as per School of Graduate Studies Calendar 2.1.2)

A signed letter from the thesis supervisor/advisor, supporting the student's application and suitability for PhD level study is required. The letter must be forwarded to the Assistant Dean, Nursing Graduate Studies. The student and supervisor are responsible for initiating the Request for Change in a Graduate Student Status form

The Assistant Dean of Nursing Graduate Program will forward the request to the Associate Dean of Health Science in the School of Graduate Studies for approval.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER GRADUATE DIPLOMA

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in the MSc/ PHCNP program complete the seven courses from the COUPN NP consortium.

- NUR 761: Pathophysiology
- NUR762: Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnosis I
- NUR763: Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnosis II
- NUR 764: Therapeutics in Primary Health Care I
- NUR 765: Therapeutics in Primary Health Care II
- NUR 766: Roles and Responsibilities
- NUR 767: Integrative Practicum

For more information about the NP courses, see http://np_education.ca

Program Duration:

One Year: the seven consortium courses will be completed one year (Fall, Winter, Spring). The permissible time for completion of the PHCNP Graduate Diploma is one year. Once the PHCNP courses have been completed successfully, students are eligible to write their RN (Extended Class) exams

Additional Requirements

Prior to starting clinical placements in the Fall of year 2 all PHCNP students are required to complete the below workshops and OSCE scheduled at the end of August and throughout September.

- Health Assessment Workshops
- Head to Toe OSCE
- Pelvic Exam Workshop
- Suture Workshop

Dates and details provided at a later date

Faculty Advisor:

PHCNP Graduate Diploma' students will have a faculty advisor assigned in the fall of their first year, by the Assistant Dean, who will aid the student during their time in the program. The faculty advisor is responsible for meeting with the student at the time that the student first registers and then again on a regular basis (i.e. within a maximum of 6 months from the time that the student enters the Program and every 6 months thereafter unless the faculty advisor believes that more frequent meetings are required).

The faculty advisor's responsibilities will include:

- Planning and approving the student's program of courses;
- Maintaining knowledge of the student's progress;
- - Providing the student with regular appraisals of progress or lack of it (i.e. the student and advisor have an obligation to meet regularly);
- Advisors provide comments and sign the education plan on an annual basis and submit this form to the nursing graduate office electronically. This form is available on Avenue to Learn Nursing Graduate Program Communication site

Faculty members who agree to advise graduate students are responsible for the guidance of these students and are not permitted to transfer students to non-graduate faculty.

GUIDELINES REGARDING VACATION, LEAVE OF ABSENCE(LOA), PARENTAL LEAVE, AND WITHDRAWAL

Students are expected to be geographically available and visit the campus regularly during their period of study. Students may arrange, through the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the School of Graduate Studies, to be “full-time off campus” for periods of up to a year. During this time, the student continues to pay fees and to be considered to be working toward completion of their degree. Students planning to be off campus must complete the form Request to be Full-time Off-campus to request permission to be absent from campus.



Leave Of Absence, Maternity/Parental Leave, Vacation

Leaves of Absence: please refer to Section 2.5.7 in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar.

Vacations: please refer the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, Section 2.5.8

Petitions for Special Consideration: Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, Section 2.5.9

Withdrawal

A student wishing to withdraw from the Nursing program for personal reasons is asked to write a letter to their faculty supervisor/ advisor, the Nursing Assistant Dean, and to the Vice-Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) detailing the reasons for withdrawal.

Students who choose to withdraw must also complete a Request for Change in a Graduate Students Status form.

Students are encouraged to consult the Calendar of the School of Graduate Studies for further details concerning any of the above regulations.